

# America's Borders: The Costs of Security



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Balancing Interests



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# Security of the Immigration Process

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- Background & Security Checks
  - Terrorist/Criminal
  - Technology
- Personal Interviews
- Registration
- US-VISIT



# Impacts of Changes

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- Delays
  - Longer processing at Immigration Services
  - Longer waits for visa interviews
  - Longer waits for visa issuance
  - Increased denials



# Costs to America

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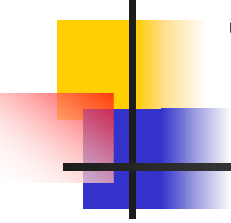
- Increased costs to agencies
  - Existing backlogs grew
  - Lack of resources
  - Funding mechanisms faulty
- Costs to travelers
  - Increased fees
  - Additional travel
  - Opportunity Costs



# Perception IS Reality

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- Too much trouble/bother
- America doesn't want us
- America is treating everyone like terrorists/criminals



# Short-term vs. Long-term Thinking

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- In the short term are we safer? Maybe.
- But there are also high short-term costs
  - Recent survey of business estimated a total cost to US economy of at least \$30 billion in lost business
- Will the changes do long-term damage? It depends on what we do now.



# Long-term Solutions

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- Need to acknowledge problems & seek solutions
- Engage with stakeholders to reach consensus & dispel negative perceptions
- Understand need for balanced, risk-based system
- Compromise on both sides





# Room for Dialogue

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- Need to create political space for realistic dialogue
  - Document the reality
  - Acknowledge the perspective of all sides
  - Avoid politicization
- Look for responsible solutions



# Finding the Balance

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- Need to realistically evaluate the security gains from current and proposed changes to the systems.
  - Example: Visa interviews – given lack of personnel and resources, are the brief 1-2 minute interviews providing measurable security benefits?
- Need to recognize some economic costs may be inevitable, but without evaluation, we can't determine what "too high" a cost might be.



# Must “Get it Right”

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- As the GAO has said of the US-VISIT system, it is an “extremely risky endeavor.”
- Why? Because costs of “getting it wrong” are high
  - Too secure – hurt our economy and our relationships around the world
  - Too lax – another 9/11



# Not an Either/or Choice!

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- We must not think of this as a choice between dollars and lives.
- We can and must find balanced solutions that protect our citizens *and* our economy.
- The business community wishes to join with the government to find those solutions.